	4.	(currently amended) The apparatus of claim 4 6, wherein the contact angle is
define	d by a fi	rst imaginary line extending through the first contact point and a central axis of the
first following surface, and an imaginary reference line.		
	5.	(cancelled)
	6.	(currently amended) The apparatus of claim 5
		An apparatus, comprising:
		a cam having at least a first guiding surface;
		a cam following assembly including a first following surface for engaging the first
guidin	g surfac	e of the cam at least at a first contact point, and a means for urging the first
follow	ing surf	ace against the first guiding surface of the cam;
	<u></u>	the first following surface defining a contact angle with the first guiding surface
of the cam; and		
		the first guiding surface of the cam being shaped such that the contact angle of the
first fo	llower o	changes substantially continually as the cam following assembly moves along a
<u>longitu</u>	dinal a	xis of the cam;
	<u>wherei</u>	n the means for urging the first following surface against the first guiding surface
of the cam wherein the spring comprises a leaf spring.		
	7.	(cancelled)
	8.	(currently amended) The apparatus of claim 5
		An apparatus, comprising:
		a cam having at least a first guiding surface;

a cam following assembly including a first following surface for engaging the first		
guiding surface of the cam at least at a first contact point, and a means for urging the first		
following surface against the first guiding surface of the cam;		
the first following surface defining a contact angle with the first guiding surface		
of the cam; and		
the first guiding surface of the cam being shaped such that the contact angle of the		
first follower changes substantially continually as the cam following assembly moves along a		
longitudinal axis of the cam;		
wherein the means for urging the first following surface against the first guiding surface		
of the cam wherein the spring comprises a gas spring.		

- 9. (cancelled)
- 10. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 5 6, wherein a deflection of the <u>leaf</u> spring varies in a manner substantially inversely proportionally to an associated variation in a trigonometric TAN function of the contact angle throughout a travel of the cam following assembly.
- 11. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 5 6, wherein the cam is shaped such that movement of the cam following assembly along the longitudinal axis of the cam causes a deflection of the <u>leaf</u> spring and a change in the contact angle of the first following surface such that the <u>a</u> magnitude of an axial force component of a reactionary force acting on the first following surface is substantially constant throughout a travel of the cam following assembly.

12 -17. (cancelled)

- 18. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12 6, wherein the <u>leaf</u> spring has a spring constant reflecting a substantially linear relationship between deflection and spring force.
- 19. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12 6, wherein the <u>leaf</u> spring has a spring function reflecting a substantially nonlinear relationship between deflection and spring force.
- 20. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12 6, wherein the cam is substantially symmetrical about the longitudinal axis thereof.
 - 21-25 (cancelled)
- 26. (new) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the first guiding surface of the cam has a substantially continually changing slope.
- 27. (new) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the first guiding surface of the cam has a substantially continually changing radius of curvature.
- 28. (new) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the contact angle is defined by a first imaginary line extending through the first contact point and a central axis of the first following surface, and an imaginary reference line.
- 29. (new) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein a deflection of the gas spring varies in a manner substantially inversely proportionally to an associated variation in a trigonometric TAN function of the contact angle throughout a travel of the cam following assembly.
- 30. (new) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the cam is shaped such that movement of the cam following assembly along the longitudinal axis of the cam causes a deflection of the gas spring and a change in the contact angle of the first following surface such that a magnitude

of an axial force component of a reactionary force acting on the first following surface is substantially constant throughout a travel of the cam following assembly.

- 31. (new) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the gas spring has a spring constant reflecting a substantially linear relationship between deflection and spring force.
- 32. (new) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the gas spring has a spring function reflecting a substantially nonlinear relationship between deflection and spring force.
- 33. (new) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the cam is substantially symmetrical about the longitudinal axis thereof.